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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000727

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/15/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [AMGT](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: GCC SUMMIT MOVED TO DECEMBER

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (C) Contacts in the government and Muscat hotels have confirmed that the GCC Summit, originally scheduled for late November in the Omani capital, has been postponed to December. The government has not yet announced a new date for the Summit, but Embassy sources report that the event may be held on or about December 24.

¶2. (C) The exact reasons for the postponement are unclear. Contacts suggest that either the main venue, the remodeled Al-Bustan Hotel, will not be fully ready in November and/or the extensive beautification projects in the capital area undertaken for the Summit will not be completed in time. Given that the Muscat Summit has already been delayed for a full year after the destruction caused by Tropical Cyclone Gonu in June 2007, it is unlikely that the Sultanate, much less Summit host Sultan Qaboos, would admit to a failure to timely complete preparations in postponing the event. The British Ambassador to Oman told emboffs at a dinner on October 14 that the Omani government may claim that the date was changed by request of Saudi Arabia due to Saudi royal family commitments back home related to the Hajj.
GRAPPO